Ann Bonny *and* Mary Read *convicted of Piracy Nov.r 28th 1720 at a Court of Vice Admiralty held at* S.t Jago de la Vega *in y.e Island of Jamaica.*

What is anarchism?

Anarchism is a political theory which aims to create anarchy, "the absence of a master, of a sovereign" (Proudhon, What is Property, page 264). In other words, anarchism is a political theory which aims to create a society within which individuals freely co-operate together as equals. As such anarchism opposes all forms of hierarchical control - be that control by the state or a capitalist - as harmful to the individual and their individuality as well as unnecessary.

In the words of anarchist L. Susan Brown:
"While the popular understanding of anarchism is a violent, anti-State movement, anarchism is a much more subtle and nuanced tradition than a simple opposition to government power. Anarchists oppose the idea that power and domination are necessary for society, and instead advocate more co-operative, anti-hierarchical forms of social, political and economic organization." (The Politics of Individualism, page 106)

However, "anarchism" and "anarchy" are undoubtedly the most misrepresented ideas in political theory. Generally, the words are used to mean "chaos" or "without order" and so, by implication, anarchists desire social chaos and a return to the "laws of the jungle".

(From www.infoshop.org/faq)

Why anarcha-feminism?

Because just because anarchism is inherently feminist does not mean that all anarchists are inherently feminist.

Because feminism is not a foot note or a lesser issue to be pushed to the side until capitalism and the state are abolished.

Because patriarchy is just as evil as statism, capitalism, racism, speciesism, environmental abuse, ageism, ableism, militarism, classism, and all those evil -isms.

Because sexism and genderism have no place in movements for freedom, peace, and equality.

Because patriarchy is hierarchy is authoritarianism is abuse.

Because something is wrong if anarchists sit in a circle for a meeting that is dominated by men.

Because something is wrong if men facilitate all the meetings, men write all the books, men are the only ones we quote, men are standing behind all the cameras, men are standing in front of all the cameras, and only men are marching in the front.

Because we live and are socialized in a patriarchal society.

Because something is wrong if women are assaulted by men who claim to be anarchists, or any men at all for that matter.

Because without feminism, anarchism is just a men's club for assholes.

Because true feminism is inherently anarchist.

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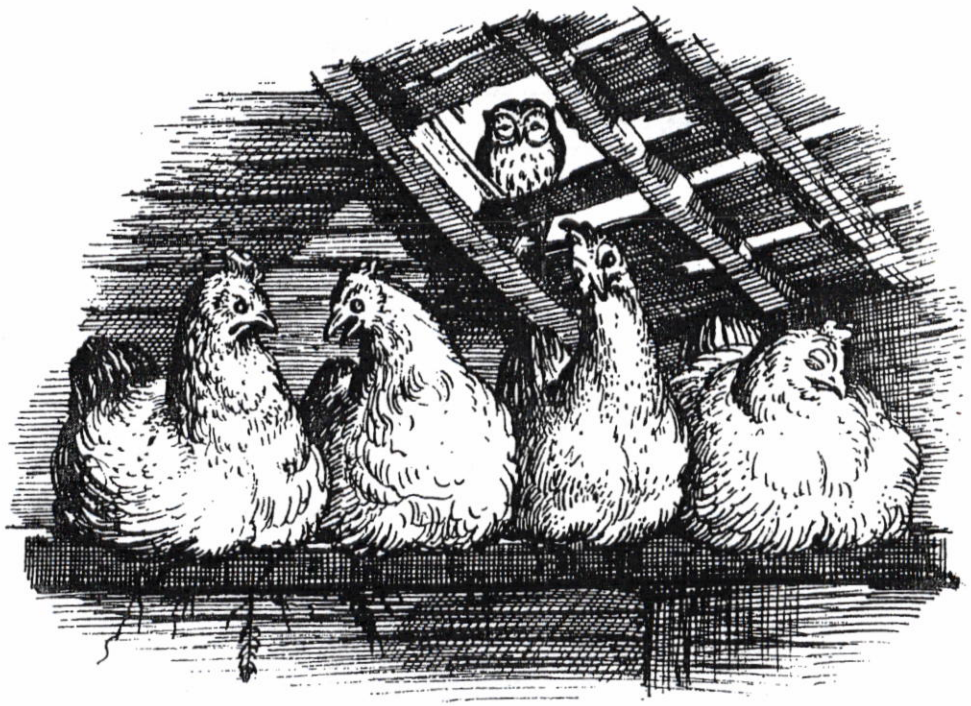
Patriarchy does a really good job of turning woman against woman against womyn against woman-identified woman against... well you get my point. In order to undo what patriarchy (and capitalism and government and sanctioned-hierarchy) has done, we must not wallow in our hatred and jealousy for one another; rather examine this JEALOUSY and this need to COMPETE with one another. (And NO, it isn't "natural".) We cannot let our frustrations within our sex, our gender, our whatever to allow us to become passive. I think most of us aren't aware of the power that can and does exist when we cooperate and feel love for one another. It is good to argue and to find differences but also to CHERISH those differences. JUDGMENT is a hard thing to unlearn, but it must be done. I was sitting in on a new women's, wommin's, & woman-identified collective starting in Washington D.C. and the group went to length about how they don't approach other women because of petty judgment or fear of judgment and how terrible that is because this collective could have started sooner had we been brave enough (or perhaps prepared enough) to smash the patriarchy lurking in our minds. We must recognize our roles as both victims *and* oppressors and work towards ceasing the existence of BOTH of those roles.

This zine presented women from all over the world, using their talents and their varying desires for a free world to collaborate on a beautiful - totally possible - revolution. We are truly EVERYWHERE, staging revolution in our communities, showing each other that we are willing to work and to fight for what we need and want... autonomy.

To my allies (or possible allies), don't be afraid to be called out on your shit. Patriarchy is institutionalized against us ALL. If you are given power and privilege along with the establishment of this institution, recognize that power and then ABANDON it. Whether you like it or not, women are part of the revolution... in fact, you can't have one unless we *are* a part of it, unless you leave YOUR patriarchy in the rubble. Don't sit around and wait for the women to point out what's wrong in our circles, you're perfectly capable of seeing fucked up shit for yourself. And please, please PLEASE don't call yourself a "Revolutionary" or an "Anarchist" if you're offended or scared of feminism because well, it sounds dumb and its unbelievably contradicting.

We feel pride when you recognize the oppressions that exist on all lines. We are happy when you acknowledge your role as an oppressor, see it has a hindrance to revolutionary action, and step down from that role. We appreciate it when you call each other out on shit. We know that some of you are trying, that some of you are educating each other; and this attempt is necessary for all of us to start experiencing the freedoms we desire.

A Letter to the Reader



ANARCHA-FEMINISM: TWO STATEMENTS

Red Rosa and Black Maria
Black Rose Anarcho-Feminists

(From the book Quiet Rumours: An Anarcha-Feminist Reader)

Who we are: An Anarcho-Feminist Manifesto

WE CONSIDER ANARCHO-FEMINISM TO BE THE ULTIMATE AND necessary radical stance at this time in world history, far more radical than any form of Marxism.

We believe that a Women's Revolutionary Movement must not mimic, but destroy, all vestiges of the male-dominated power structure, the State itself — with its whole ancient and dismal apparatus of jails, armies, and armed robbery (taxation); with all its murder; with all of its grotesque and repressive legislation and military attempts, internal and external, to interfere with people's private lives and freely-chosen co-operative ventures.

The world obviously cannot survive many more decades of rule by gangs of armed males calling themselves governments. The situation is insane, ridiculous and even suicidal. Whatever its varying forms of justifications, the armed State is what is threatening all of our lives at present. The State, by its inherent nature, is really incapable of reform. True socialism, peace and plenty for all, can be achieved only by people themselves, not by representatives ready and able to turn guns on all who do not comply with State directives. As to how we proceed against the pathological State structure, perhaps the best word is to outgrow rather than overthrow. This process entails, among other things, a tremendous thrust of education and communication among all peoples. The intelligence of womankind has at last been brought to bear on such oppressive male inventions as the church and the legal family; it must now be brought to re-evaluate the ultimate stronghold of male domination, the State.

While we recognise important differences in the rival systems, our analysis of the evils of the State must extend to both its communist and capitalist versions.

We intend to put to the test the concept of freedom of expression, which we trust will be incorporated in the ideology of the coming socialist Sisterhood which is destined to play a determining role in the future of the race, if there really is to be a future.

We are all socialists. We refuse to give up this pre-Marxist term which has been used as a synonym by many anarchist thinkers. Another synonym for anarchism is libertarian socialism, as opposed to Statist and authoritarian varieties. Anarchism (from the Greek *anarchos* — without ruler) is the affirmation of human freedom and dignity expressed in a negative, cautionary term signifying that no person should rule or dominate another person by force or threat of force. Anarchism indicates what people should not do to one another. Socialism, on the other hand, means all the groovy things people can do and build together, once they are able to combine efforts and resources on the basis of common interest, rationality and creativity.

We love our Marxist sisters and all our sisters everywhere, and have no interest in disassociating ourselves from their constructive struggles. However, we reserve the right to criticise their politics when we feel that they are obsolete or irrelevant or inimical to the welfare of womankind.

As Anarcho-Feminists, we aspire to have the courage to question and challenge absolutely everything — including, when it proves necessary, our own assumptions.

Blood of the Flower: An Anarcha-Feminist Statement

We are an independent collective of women who feel that anarchism is the logically consistent expression of feminism.

We believe that each woman is the only legitimate articulator of her own oppression. Any woman, regardless of previous political involvement knows only too intimately her own oppression, and hence, can and must define what form her liberation will take.

Why are many women sick and tired of 'movements'? Our answer is that the fault lies with the nature of movements, not with the individual women. Political movements, as we have known them, have separated our political activities from our personal dreams of liberation, until either we are made to abandon our dreams as impossible or we are forced to drop out of the movement because we hold steadfastly to our dreams. As true anarchists and as true feminists, we say *dare to dream the impossible, and never settle for less than total translation of the impossible into reality.*

There have been two principle forms of action in the women's liberation movement. One has been the small, local, volitionally organised consciousness-raising group, which at best has been a very meaningful mode of dealing with oppression from a personal level and, at worst, never evolved beyond the level of a therapy group.

The other principle mode of participation has been large, bureaucratized groups which have focused their activities along specific policy lines, taking great pains to translate women's oppression into concrete, single-issue programmes. Women in this type of group often have been involved in formal leftist politics for some time, but could not stomach the sexism within other leftist groups. However, after reacting against the above-mentioned attitude of leftist males, many women with formal political orientations could not accept the validity of what they felt were the 'therapy groups' of their suburban sisters; yet they themselves still remained within the realm of male-originated Marxist-Leninist, Trotskyist, Maoist rhetoric, and continued to use forms of political organisation employed by the male leftist groups they were reacting against. The elitism and centralisation of the old male left thereby has found, and already poisoned parts of the women's movement with the attitude that political sophistication must mean 'building' a movement around single issue programmes, thereby implying that 'we must be patient until the masses' consciousness is raised to our level.' How condescending to assume that an oppressed person must be told that she is oppressed! How condescending to assume that her consciousness will grow only by plodding along, from single-issue to next single issue.

In the past decade or more, women of the left were consistently intimidated out of fighting for our own liberation, avoiding the obvious fact that all women are an oppressed group. We are so numerous and dispersed that we have identified ourselves erroneously as members of particular classes on the basis of the class of 'our men', our fathers or our husbands. So women of the left regarding ourselves as middle-class more than oppressed women, have been led to neglect engaging in our own struggle as

What is your vision of social change as relates to the books you [Mujeres Creando] write and the videos and graffiti you make?

JP: You can want a microphone or camera like you'd want a rifle, neither with bullets nor with audio or pictures. No, I'll say what I want to say to others.

We have given communication a high place, on the same level as creativity — that is, creativity in communication. So we have preferred to take from our roots and, by leaving them, we begin a creative communication process. In '92 we started to do graffiti. We did it in Cochabamba, Santa Cruz, and other places. And so, out of all our work that we do, the graffitis (signed Mujeres Creando) are not anonymous — we put what we want, and everybody knows that MC is in this area, and if someone wants to put us in jail, he or she comes here and does it. Whenever we've gone out to do graffiti, we have been afraid, and we're always afraid. But we've thought about our right to do it... Coca-Cola pays and paints, Repsol pays and paints, so why can't we paint without paying? The problem isn't that the walls are painted, the problem is that it's not paid for. If we must pay for public space, then it's a big contradiction in democracy. What's public and what's private?

Streets are public space, the whole city's courtyard, not a jail hallway, where you go from the jail of your house to the jail of your office job... if it's public, then everybody can use it. But if you pay for public space it becomes private. Public space doesn't exist. Let's start this discussion.

What's dirty? What's clean? "You're making my walls dirty!" Oh, so when Coca-Cola contracts a painter, it doesn't make the wall dirty? That's an aesthetic concept. It seems to me that it has made the wall dirty in a disgusting way. And what we have done, our graffiti, that's beautiful.

What are some of the next projects for Mujeres Creando? Is it possible that you will participate in IMC Bolivia?

J.P.: If we want Mujeres Creando to go on, it needs to question itself, and not embody a myth like "a cute group of feminists" because you have to have roots in society. For this, I propose to build a space (Creando Feminismo Autonomo [Creating Autonomous Feminism]) for other women and other social groups where we'd build feminism in terms of Mujeres Creando... and I think it's important to let people know about these experiences through Indymedia.

My privileged space is for women; I want to start with them. I want to start from there, to feed others and myself through the Indymedia space. I don't consider this women's space to be apart from others — I think that we can get into deeper discussion if we start with women. But I don't want it to start in Indymedia and finish with the women. It's a social proposal by women and for both women AND men.

What is it to be a feminist in Latin America?

JP: To be a feminist in our society means to fight against neoliberalism and its ideology; for us, being a feminist means denouncing racism, machismo/sexism (in the Left and within anarchism, as well as femenine sexism), homophobia, domestic violence, etc. It means denouncing the sexist, bureaucratized, technocratic women of this generation (for us, those women that have fallen into neoliberalism and are administrators of the murderous politics of the World Bank, IMF, etc.) Here's the difference between us and them: they use power and are within the system, and therefore they always control the forces (military, economic, social, political) against those who oppose what they say.

So, we're not interested in power, women's offices, or ministries. We are interested in the daily construction of practice and theory in the streets and in nurturing our creativity.

Our generation denounces the unjust relationship between men and women, just as the class concept has denounced the unjust relationship between the bourgeois and the proletariat. Therefore, it should have led to a revolution, but it's changed into a concept grabbed up by the system, because the only thing that works is the description of being a man or woman today, not the denunciation of the relationship's injustice... so, the generation becomes a descriptive concept. Feminism looks for ways to recover this category, which has a descriptive aspect, but more importantly its denouncing character. We bring this character forward in our fight for the construction of our anti-patriarchal theory.

What do you think of the "lack of women" in social movements? Is it a myth or an historical reality?

JP: It seems to me like a blindfold when people ask, "where are the women?" We have been around since the beginning of revolutionary moments, always.

On the other hand, in today's era, social movements (Sem-Terra, de los Deudores, Madres y Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo) are all women-led fights resisting and confronting dictatorships. What we see is a division between public and private affairs, a blindfold, an invisibility in the struggles.

How do men and women, indoctrinated into a patriarchal society, react to the goals of Mujeres Creando?

JP: Women have sympathy as well as fear. The sexist women are much more stubborn and violent than macho men. These men are careful about having sex with us; they're afraid, it's some kind of complex... but in the end they have a certain kind of respect toward us because we have been fighting for ten or eleven years. At first, most women have sympathy, and later they're afraid because it's a demanding and radical proposal, but that's the only way to build a place where everything is not superficial and diluted. And the men that sympathize with us follow us if they're interested in everything, but they keep wanting us to be like mothers, feeding them; they're a little lazy because they don't want to accept the challenge of making their own group.

our primary struggle. Instead, we have dedicated ourselves to fight on behalf of other oppressed peoples, thus alienating ourselves from our own plight. Many say that this attitude no longer exists in the women's movement, that it originated only from the guilt trip of the white middle class male, but even today women in autonomous women's movements speak of the need to organise working class women, without concentrating on the need to organise ourselves — as if we were already beyond that level. This does not mean (if we insist first and foremost on freeing ourselves) that we love our oppressed sisters any the less; on the contrary, we feel that the best way for us to be true to all liberation struggles is to accept and deal directly with our own oppression.

Why Anarchism?

We do not believe that rejection of Marxist-Leninist analysis and strategy is by definition political naiveté. We do not believe it is politically naive to maintain the attitude that even a 'democratically centralised' group could be considered the 'vanguard' spokeswoman for us. The nature of groups concerned with 'building' movements is: 1) to water down the 'more extreme' dreams into 'realistic' demands, and 2) to eventually become an organ of tyranny itself. No thanks!

There is another entire radical tradition which has run counter to Marxist-Leninist theory and practice through all of modern radical history — from Bakunin to Kropotkin to Sophie Perovskaya to Emma Goldman to Errico Malatesta to Murray Bookchin — and that is anarchism. It is a tradition less familiar to most radicals because it has consistently been distorted and misrepresented by the more highly organised State organisations and Marxist-Leninist organisations.

Anarchism is not synonymous with irresponsibility and chaos. Indeed, it offers meaningful alternatives to the outdated organisational and policy-making practices of the rest of the left. The basic anarchist form of organisation is a small group, volitionally organised and maintained, which must work toward defining the oppression of its members and what form their struggle for liberation must take.

Organising women, in the New Left and Marxist left, is viewed as amassing troops for the Revolution But we affirm that each woman joining in struggle is the Revolution. WE ARE THE REVOLUTION!

We must learn to act on impulse, to abandon the restrictions on behaviour that society has taught us to place on ourselves. The 'movement' has been, for most of us, a thing removed from ourselves. We must no longer think of ourselves as members of a movement, but as *individual* revolutionaries, co-operating. Two, three, five or ten such individual revolutionaries who know and trust each other intimately can carry out revolutionary acts and make our own policy. As members of a leaderless affinity group, each member participates on an equal level of power, thus negating the hierarchical function of power. DOWN WITH ALL BOSSES! Then we will not be lost in a movement where leadership determines for us the path the movement will take — we are our own movement, we determine our own movement's direction. We have refused to allow ourselves to be directed, spoken for,

and eventually cooled off.

We do not believe, as some now affirm, that the splintering of the Women's Movement means the end to all of our revolutionary effectiveness. No! The spirit of the women is just too large to be guided and manipulated by 'a movement'. Small groups, acting on their own and deciding upon their own actions, are the logical expression of revolutionary women. This, of course, does not preclude various groups working together on various projects or conferences.

To these ends, and because we do not wish to he out of touch with other women, we have organised as an autonomous collective within the Women's Centre in Cambridge, Mass. The Women's Centre functions as a federation; that is, not as a policy-making group, but as a centre for various women's groups to meet. We will also continue to write statements like this one as we feel moved to. We would really like to hear from all and sundry!

ALL POWER TO THE IMAGINATION!

AN INTERVIEW WITH MUJERES CREANDO

Translated by Pat Southorn March 2002

(From the book Quiet Rumours: An Anarcha-Feminist Reader)

INTERVIEW WITH JULIETA PAREDES OF MUJERES CREANDO, AN anarcha-feminist group in La Paz, Bolivia.

How did Mujeres Creando (Women Creating) come about? What is its goal?

JP: Mujeres Creando is a "craziness" started by three women (Julieta Paredes, Maria Galindo and Monica Mendoza) from the arrogant, homophobic and totalitarian Left of Bolivia during the '80s, where heterosexuality was still the model and feminism was understood to be divisive. It's not really a new design in a society such as ours. So we had already been developing this kind of criticism. The other part of our criticism of the Left is toward what has been a constructed social practice; that is, it was unethical, dishonest and it had a double morality.

Revolutionary in the streets, revolutionary in their words, revolutionary in their talking, yet, at home, they were the dictators of their own families, with their own loved ones.

We have started to realize the original proposal of Mujeres Creando, and so we have been picking over all our experiences with the Left, as well as learning through our first time taking part in the San Bernard Conference in Argentina, which was an experience of all Latin American feminists.

From the viewpoint of Mujeres Creando, one way to move toward our goal is the concept of diversity (the other is creativity). Diversity is fundamental for us, because if you look at how other groups are made up, they're usually of the same kind of people (barrio [neighborhood], young people, workers, lesbians, etc.). Diversity is a way to criticise these "enclosed cubicles" in society. Mujeres Creando is made up of lesbians and heterosexuals, whites and indigenous women, young and old women, divorced and married women, women from the country and from the city, etc. The system tries to keep us in the "enclosed cubicles" and to divide us so that it can control us more effectively.

What's important is that we, through our connection with other women, are starting to observe the diversity in which Latin American feminism developed; that is, there were farmers, students, soldiers, lesbians, etc. It was beautiful and it captivated us.

Afterwards we realized that it wasn't enough just to be a woman... there were deep political differences. We keep on with the feminist movement and become feminists, and immediately we see something that seems to us like empty space: it's all good and diverse, but what was our position as to (government) power?

The difference between us and those who talk about the overthrow of capitalism is that all their proposals for a new society come from the patriarchy of the left. As feminists in Mujeres Creando we want revolution, a real change of the system; we do not want just to change capitalism, nor just to change attitudes toward women, but also a change in attitude toward young people and the environment. We want to change patriarchy, in a historical and long-lasting transformation that is being created by the feminism we dream of.

In the process of constructing organisation — no bosses, no hierarchy — I speak for myself and don't represent anybody... I've said it and I'll say it again that we're not anarchists by Bakunin or the CNT, but rather by our grandmothers, and that's a beautiful school of anarchism.

We want indigenous rights to be respected, because our language is the most important thing. Because our language is very beautiful, our regional clothing. Because there are a lot of people who aren't wearing the clothing now, they say they don't want to put it on, that they're ashamed to use it now. There are also people who are ashamed to speak in our own language. I don't think that's right, because we are indigenous, and we aren't going to be ashamed of being what we are, because everything we have is our culture and it's real.

It's not true that we want to separate from Mexico. What we want is for them to recognize us as Mexicans, as the indigenous we are, but also as Mexicans, since we were born here, we live here."

ll I was trying to do was educate myself. I do this often with things I don't entirely understand- like how a CD player works, what the difference is between a mule and a donkey, or in this case, what exactly was it that my anarchist classmates talking about?

And now I know. So, here I sit writing a piece for a 'zine— collaborating with two of the most righteous people I know, and contemplating anarchism and anti-authoritarianism, and how the simple phrase "a free society organized along lines of cooperation and mutual aid" has changed my entire political worldview.

That phrase comes from a flyer entitled "Ethical Anarchism" which was the beginning of my education in anarchy and anti-authoritarian ideology. Another key phrase from that document jumped out at me. It reads "Ethical anarchism never relies on fear to accomplish anything, because a person who is afraid is not free."

A person who is afraid is not free. Read that again. Read it, and then think about the Homeland Security Advisory System and its color-coded Terror Alert levels. Think about the evening news teasers such as "cyber predators are after your kids— news at eleven." Think about our "pre-emptive" war in Iraq. Think about rapper P. Diddy's slogan "Vote or Die". Now say it with me again. A person who is afraid is not free.

We live in a culture of fear. Fear cultivated by the

government, by the media, by corporations, because when we are afraid we aren't outraged. We aren't questioning. Our fear keeps us under governmental control. Our fear keeps us complacent.

But there is a better way, and anarchy envisions that way as a free society based on cooperation and mutual aid. No more government, no more hierarchical power structures, just a free society organized along lines of cooperation and mutual aid. Makes sense to me.

We know what a boot looks like
when seen from underneath,
we know the philosophy of boots...
Soon we will invade like weeds,
everywhere but slowly;
the captive plants will rebel
with us, fences will topple
brick walls ripple and fall,
there will be no more boots.
Meanwhile we eat dirt
and sleep; we are waiting
under your feet.
When we say Attack
you will hear nothing
at first.

-Margaret Atwood
(Song of the Worms)

Comandanta Susana

"I've been working with women in the communities of Los Altos for many years. I am Tzotzil. Since I'm illiterate, and don't even know how to write, it's even more difficult to make the effort to talk. But we're making progress in the towns...I'm not saying it's a lot, but there's progress. As women, we suffer repression within the family, and an even greater one, in that we don't have any right to complain about everything we are suffering, everything we are feeling. There's still much work to be done. I can't say that it's here and everything's fine. More compa~eras need to participate.

We have suffered from the presence of the armies all these years. And the ones who suffer the most are the women, because we can't walk, we can't go out because we're afraid of the soldiers. We can't go out to bring in our firewood, our water, because they're always in the roads. In addition, they abuse the women sometimes. If we go along the road with our little things, they always stop us and search us. They take up our time, they threaten us. They really do make life hard for the women. We don't like their being here. We don't need them, because we know how to take care of ourselves.

We are all fighting together, all of Mexico, not just in Chiapas, not just in these communities. We want national and international civil society to help us. We are calling on everyone, because that's the most important thing.

We have hope that there's going to be a solution, that it's not going to be like this all the time. That the armies will have to get out, return to their barracks.

We've seen that Fox only makes promises, he just says his pretty words, but he doesn't carry them out. He says he's going to get rid of all the armies from the most important places, but he doesn't do it. The truth is we don't trust Fox. He doesn't want to have dialogue for once and all, he just announces it.

The men are struggling to totally understand what we are asking for as women. We are asking to have rights and for the men to give us liberty, and for them to understand that we have to fight for that along with them. For them to learn to not take our participating here badly, because, before, we never went to meetings and encuentros. Now there's just a few of us who go, but the path is opening up in all ways. There's more

freedom. The men now take our words into consideration, and they understand that we, as women, have a place where we can present everything we feel and everything we are suffering.

We have been resisting for more than 7 years, ever since the declaration of war. This has been quite difficult for us as women, with all the armies. In addition, the armies have caused the appearance of paramilitaries, who hide along the roads. We can't walk along the little roads now. They're there, masked, hiding."

Every daring attempt to make a great change in existing conditions, every lofty vision of new possibilities for the human race, has been labeled Utopian. -Emma Goldman

Red Emma

Emma Goldman was a rebel, an anarchist, a feminist, a lecturer and a writer.

She was born in what is now Lithuania but was then Russia, in a Jewish ghetto, and moved early to St. Petersburg, where she began working in factories. It was in these factories that Goldman was introduced to revolutionary ideas. In 1885, after refusing to be married off by her father, she left Russia with her half sister Helen, and began working in the textile industry in Rochester, New York. She was sixteen.

Briefly married in 1887, but later separated (thus retaining her American citizenship) Emma Goldman moved to New York where she became active in the anarchist movement. She met and lived with Alexander Berkman, along with whom she was a major leader of the anarchist movement in the United States. She became one of the most outspoken and well known of American radicals at that time, lecturing and writing on anarchism, women's rights and other political topics.

Goldman was jailed in 1893 after she urged unemployed workers to, *"Ask for work. If they do not give you work, ask for bread. If they do not give you work or bread, take bread."* Goldman would soon be so accustomed to being arrested after her speeches that she would bring a book on stage with her so that she would be prepared. She was arrested for disseminating literature about birth control as well as conspiracy against the draft laws, among other things.

In 1919 after she had been imprisoned for two years (for organizing against WWI) she was deported to Russia. At her deportation hearing, J. Edgar Hoover, directing the hearing, called her *"one of the most dangerous women in America."*

In Russia, she experienced the Russian Revolution. Her experiences during the Revolution helped change

we see that the Fox government doesn't want to carry out the three signals that we've asked for in order to engage in dialogue. That 7 of the 259 positions where the armies are be withdrawn. That the zapatista prisoners are released. And that the San Andre's Accords are recognized. They say he's already carried them out, but we see he hasn't."

Comandanta Yolanda

"We want the COCOPA law to be approved because it protects women. It says that 'the Indian towns can choose their authorities and exercise their forms of internal government with autonomy, or in accordance with their customs and culture, but always safeguarding the participation of women, who are equal with men.' That means that the participation of indigenous women will be in the Constitution.

The COCOPA law says quite clearly that 'the dignity and safety of women in the resolution of any problems' must be respected. It's true that there are customs which aren't good, drunkenness, for example. That's not good culture, nor is forced marriage...What we are doing is fighting to change it little by little, so that it improves. But in our culture's methods of working, of making crafts and many other things, we have a culture that cannot be lost. We don't want to be a country apart. We want to be included in Mexican law.

Ever since I was little I've had a very hard life in my community and in my family. We didn't have maize or anything to eat. But I hadn't understood the situation. Even I believed that it was like that because the old ones had told a story that suffering exists because God wants it like that, that we must resign ourselves. When I was a bit bigger, I found the organization's words. Then I realized that it wasn't useful to be resigned, to die like that, in poverty. And that's when I also decided to join the struggle. I began talking with the towns and to encourage other women, until we had a broader understanding that we, as women, have a double suffering. It woke us up quite a bit.

don't do anything? We have to work ourselves, to help each other in order to have the little we need. The women began working in collectives then, in bakeries, vegetable gardens, and other things.

Before, women didn't participate in meetings, in the assembly, since their husbands wouldn't let them. The men understand now, women can go to meetings, and men can stay at home taking care of the animals. Now if men see that there's a lot of work in the kitchen, they help their wives or their compa~eras. They didn't do it before, now they do. There's a change.

We ourselves explain to the boys and girls that there should be respect, that we are equal. The girls and boys go to school. And not just them, but the older women as well, because they learn well there. The men go also. Because we ourselves are organizing ourselves now, and we're not in the government schools anymore, but in our own autonomous educational system. We all go there.

I believe we're going to achieve the change we want, if it's going to be achieved, because I see many women organizing themselves. We invite them also, and that way we'll have more strength. We're going to achieve it, with all of us.

We want the San Andre's Accords to be recognized. For us, as indigenous, they are very important, because, as long as we are not recognized, we'll continue to be ignored. They don't recognize us, they don't take us into account. We want our method of speaking to be recognized, of dressing, of organizing ourselves. But we aren't going to continue the bad things.

We don't say that Fox is here now and Mexico has changed now. No. Change itself isn't made by them. Just because the PRI was brought down doesn't mean that there's going to be change, no matter who wins. We've already seen that. It's the people of Mexico who have to build the change they want.

her ideas on the use of violence: after the Red Army was used against strikers, Goldman began rejecting violence except as a method of self-defense. She wrote three books during this time, including her autobiography "Living My Life".

In 1936, Goldman went to Spain to support the Spanish Revolution and the fight against Franco's fascism that was the Spanish Civil War. Emma suffered a stroke in 1940, and died shortly after in Canada. She is buried in Chicago, near the graves of the Haymarket anarchists.

Voltairine de Cleyre

(This biography is adopted from "Voltairine de Cleyre – a biographical sketch" by Chris Crass. You can check out the whole article at www.lucyparsonsproject.org)

Voltairine de Cleyre was born in Leslie, Michigan on November 17, 1866. She was raised among radical parents (her mother tied to the Abolitionist movement and her father maintaining French free-thought and socialist convictions) and her family was deeply poverty-stricken.

Hoping to eventual relieve his daughter of their economic state, he enrolled her in a convent for her high school education. Her struggles within this Catholic school is what led her, as she said, to her ultimate acceptance of Anarchism (see her essay "The Making of an Anarchist").

Upon leaving the convent, Voltairine went to work offering private lessons in music, French, and fancy penmanship... Voltairine also began her vocation as a public lecturer and writer... In 1886, Voltairine began to write for and then soon became the editor of a weekly free thought newspaper, The Progressive Age.

She was also contributing to many other secularist publications in the country, and touring a lecture circuit in Michigan.

Like several other anarchists of this time period (and still today), the Haymarket anarchists heavily affected Voltairine. She often spoke at annual ceremonies commemorating the Haymarket Martyrs alongside other speakers such as Emma Goldman and Lucy Parsons.

In her own life she tried to practice the feminist principles that she was advocating. She spoke repeatedly about women maintaining a room of their own, to maintain autonomy and independence. Though she had a hard time making the money to pay rent, she maintained a room of her own and even while involved in relationships kept separate quarters.

She worked hard to raise consciousness through her lectures, essays, poems, discussion groups, and living example. Voltairine often spoke of a moral revolution that would change not only social arrangements of oppression but also social relationships that are based on oppression.

In the last year of her life she wrote her powerful essay, "Direct Action" and vocally supported the militant unionists of the Industrial Workers of the World. After suffering several weeks of severely weakened health, Voltairine died on June 20th, 1912. According to Avrich, two thousand attended the funeral at Waldheim cemetery where she was buried next to the Haymarket martyr's.

In 1914 Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman published the Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre which was described as "an arsenal of knowledge for the student and soldier of freedom".

other brothers would keep on dying, and I decided. And not only me, there are women who decided to be soldiers, and those women now have the insurgent rank of captain, of major, of lieutenant. That's how we saw that women can indeed be strong.

In the beginning, I had to pay a price for the truth. The men didn't understand, even though I always explained to them that it was necessary to fight so that we wouldn't always be dying of hunger. The men didn't like the idea. According to them, women were only good for having children, and they should take care of them...

And there are also some women who have that idea in their heads. Then I didn't like them. Some men said it wasn't good, that women didn't have the right to participate, that women are stupid. Some compa~eras said "I'm stupid." I always confronted that. I explained to them that it wasn't true, that we are women, but we can do other work. Little by little the men began to understand, and the women also. That's why women are fighting now. That's why you know that in our fight it's not just the men who are fighting here, we're fighting together.

Since the war began, the bad government has been putting the armies in, but the ones who have had to confront that problem are the women. The militarization has been very hard, but the women haven't been afraid. They've gone out to run the soldiers off. And so we've seen that women do have strength, not with weapons but with strength and with shouts, we see that we can be strong as women. The truth is we have resisted, even though it's been years since the war began. Despite the suffering, we are still here. If we hadn't resisted, we wouldn't still be here. Even though a lot has happened to us, in spite of that, we haven't surrendered. We've been strong.

As zapatista women we've made a little progress. We saw that we didn't have anything, and we ourselves asked ourselves: who's going to give us anything if we

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Translated by irlandesa

March 8, Mexico
International Day of the Rebel Woman

Today, March 8, 2001, the international day of rebel women, zapatista women, through three of their Comandantas who are members of the Clandestine Revolutionary Indigenous Committee - and who are all part of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation delegation which is reaching the gates of Mexico City today - say their word:

Comandanta Esther

"To women throughout the country, we are saying let us fight together. We have to fight more because as indigenous we are triply looked down upon: as indigenous women, as women and as poor women. But women who are not indigenous also suffer. That is why we are inviting all of them to fight, so that we will not continue suffering. It's not true that women don't know, that they're not good for anything except being in the home. That doesn't happen only in the indigenous communities, but also in the cities.

When I was a little girl I was hungry and sick. Even though we didn't eat well, here we are. We go on.

I didn't know how to speak in Spanish. I went to school, but I didn't learn anything there. But when I entered the organization (EZLN) I learned to write and to speak Spanish, the little bit that I know, I'm engaged in the struggle.

Once I grew up I began to see that we didn't have adequate food, that others did, and we didn't. Why didn't we? I saw that I had 4 or 5 little brothers and sisters who had died, that's when I realized, why were my little brothers and sisters dying? I saw that it was necessary to fight, because if I didn't do anything,

A Living Example

Voltairine's commitment to non-violence and sympathy for those who used violence was put to the test later in her life. Towards the end of 1902 one of her former students, Herman Helcher, who suffered mental illnesses attempted to assassinate her. She was on her way to teach when Helcher walked up to her and fired a pistol point blank into her chest. When she fell to the ground two more bullets where fired into her back. She managed to run a block before collapsing. One of her other students, a doctor, immediately found her and called an ambulance. She was in critical condition and many feared that she would not survive. Within a few days she began to recover and her condition stabilized. What she did next shocked many, infuriated some, and gained her respect far and wide. In keeping with her belief that capitalism and authoritarianism corrupt people and push them to the use of violence, she "in accordance with the teachings of Tolstoy, the doctrine of returning good for evil" (Avrich p.174) refused to identify Helcher as her assailant or to press any charges against him. She then wrote a letter that was published by the daily paper of Philadelphia, where she was living at the time. The letter read:

"The boy who, they say, shot me is crazy. Lack of proper food and healthy labor made him so. He ought to be put in an asylum. It would be an outrage against civilization if he were sent to jail for an act which was the product of a diseased brain."

"...I have no resentment towards the man. If society were so constituted as to allow every man, woman and child to lead a normal life there would be no violence in this world. It fills me with horror to think the brutal acts done in the name of government. Every act of violence finds its echo in another act of violence. The policeman's club breeds criminals."

'peace on earth, good will to men'. Acts of violence done in the name of Anarchy are caused by men and women who forget to be philosophers - teachers of the people - because their physical and mental suffering - drive them to desperation."

Upon recovery Voltairine began speaking throughout Philadelphia on subjects such as "Crime and Punishment" and on prison reform and abolition. She continued to work for clemency for Helcher.

Lucy Parsons

"Lucy Parson's personae and historical role provide material for the makings of a truly exemplary figure---not to mention a 'poster girl'—for U.S. radical history. Think of it: lifelong anarchist, labor organizer, writer, editor publisher, and dynamic speaker, a woman of color of mixed black, Mexican, and Native American heritage, founder in the 1880s of the Chicago Working Women's Union that organized garment workers and called for equal pay for equal work, and also invited housewives to join with the demand of wages for housework—and later (1905), co-founder of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), which made organizing women and people of color a priority.

"But acknowledgment of Lucy Parsons has been minimal.

"It is not that radical women have been ignored in the new women's history, or that women have been ignored in the new histories of radicalism; witness the prominence in both of other female activists of the time: Voltairine de Cleyre, Emma Goldman, Mother Jones, Ida B. Wells, Mary Marcy, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Agnes Smedley, Margaret Sanger, Jane Addams, Dorothy Day, Mabel Dodge, Helen Keller, Kate Richards O'Hare, Carolyn Lowe, and many others are presented as strong and autonomous activists. Certainly, as Carolyn Ashbaugh, Parson's lone biographer asserts, 'Lucy Parsons was black, a woman, and working class---three reasons people are often excluded from history.'" (Excerpt from Roxanne Dunbar-Ortriz's afterword to the book *Lucy Parsons: Freedom, Equality, & Solidarity,* edited by Gale Ahrens, Charles H. Kerr publishing company)

It is very worth it to read the words of Lucy Parsons. Her writings are around a century old, but it is amazing how much of what she said still applies to our situations today. It would be a real loss to allow such an amazing woman to disappear into the dustbin of history.

Mujeres Libres provide a living example of many important aspects of anarchist theory.

Firstly, they understood that the collective is only as strong as the individuals that make it up. In order to build a strong anarchist movement, they encouraged and supported women to fulfil their full potential. Indeed many members of Mujeres Libres were only 13 or 14 years old when the revolution started. Yet, like Teresina above, they discovered that they did have the ability to undertake the challenging task of building a new world.

Secondly Mujeres Libres understood the importance of direct action and self-activity, both in making revolutionaries and making a revolution. They didn't make an artificial distinction between propaganda and organising, between ideas and action. Their ideas were formed by their experiences on the ground.

Finally, the Mujeres Libres showed that ideas are never set in stone, to be implemented when the right time comes. Their ideas grew and developed, changed and became influential.

Revolution is a messy business. In order to change society fundamentally, long held ideas about what is normal and natural have to be challenged. New revolutionaries and a new revolutionary society will result from the arguments and debates that are held in many different places - the home, the supermarket, the pub - by many different people.

Mujeres Libres saw the revolution as far more than a single overnight event. It is also a process, continually changing, as disagreements are resolved, and new disputes are identified. They showed that revolution, far from being a dry academic endeavour is like life; never simple and straightforward, but dynamic.

classes in social studies. Between 600-800 women were attending these classes each day in Barcelona in December 1938. In co-operation with the anarchist unions they sent up apprenticeship programmes.

Hand in hand with producing propaganda came the day-to-day work necessary to defend their revolution from fascist attack. They supplied food to the militias and set up community dining rooms. They organised support for women in the militias, setting up shooting ranges and target practice classes. They set up a school for nurses and an emergency medical clinic to treat those injured in the fighting.

Teresina, despite her lack of experience in the medical field was named administrator. Here she speaks with pride of her role "I remember how many times fathers would come up to me in the clinic to request something, and I would say. "Please, here all of us are equals" And they would say to me, "Here, you really have made the revolution." I had such satisfaction from this. Because I administered the whole thing without any education... What I believed, that's what I put in practice there... and that's what I can tell you of what I did for the revolution. The rest, I did what everyone else did. But this was something I did".

However the revolution was more than defeating fascism, it was about building a new society which cared for the needs of all. Travelling through Catalonia and Aragon members of Mujeres Libres helped to establish rural collectives. Many women went with representatives of the anarchist union (CNT) and the anarchist federation (FAI) with makeshift loud speakers calling on peasants to "come over to our side".

In Barcelona they ran a lying-in hospital, which provided birth and post-natal care for women, as well as classes on child and maternal health, birth control and sexuality. An institute of Maternal and Childcare, named after the French anarchist, Louise Michel, was set up in Barcelona in February 1938.

"The fact is *money* and not *votes* is what rules the people. And the capitalists no longer care to buy the voters, they simply buy the 'servants' after they've elected to 'serve.' The idea that the poor man's vote amounts to anything is the veriest delusion. The ballot is only the paper veil that hides the tricks.

"....We know there never was a law passed that ever prevented one single crime from being committed. We know crime will cease only when men are taught to do good, because it makes them happier to do right than wrong. We know that if passing laws would have prevented crime or made men better, that we would all be angels by now." -Lucy Parsons

my worth to the state: a small-scale observation

I glance at the sticker on my windshield and the sun is all of a sudden harsh on the skin of my arms. What's the date? Did I pay my taxes? Is this sticker expired? Shit. If so, there is a cop with a really shitty haircut waiting for ME at the top of this hill. I sigh. That piece-of-shit sticker doesn't expire for a month. But worse than this brief panic-stricken moment is this terrible realization; but really, a reminder of a realization: I am a consumer and as such the definition of productivity has been rewritten. My productivity lies in my ability to pay, my ability to consume. My face tightens like I'm going to cry but I don't. The sun burns. *Is it more terrible that I know this or that nobody else does?* And my productivity is fueled by fear. I don't *want* the cop to hassle me, nor am I prepared to live without my car. I would like to think that there is an ethical purpose behind this sly abuse; behind the man with a gun who is here to keep me paying, to keep me in a state of consumption also known as distraction. "To Serve and Protect... PROPERTY." Straight from his mouth, not mine. But since when is protecting property ethical? (And there is no denying that we claim it is.) Morals have all but burnt away in the ferocity of the sun. My agency was stolen by bureaucracy at my birth and I spend my time now trying to retrieve it. But that becomes criminal. Dissent becomes despicable. The state is my most detested bully - cornering me in this awkward hallway, threatening me; humiliating me and shoving me about until I hand over my lunch money. And once I hand it over, they tell me I'm FREE! But this is a mild analogy.

The State doesn't just use its fists; it uses an unfathomable amount of weaponry, it uses its dick, and it uses the history it's

or participation). Their early work was a combination of consciousness raising and direct action.

In order to gain mutual support, they created networks of women anarchists. Attending meetings with one another, they checked out reports of sexist behaviour and worked out how to deal with it. Flying day-care centres were set up in efforts to involve more women in union activities.

A journal was produced, distributed and advertised via existing anarchist networks. In it women reported on what work they were actually doing. Consciousness raising was important, every issue had an article about exceptional women, and they also published a column in other anarchist magazines. In addition their journal printed articles on cultural themes, on education, on movies, on sport. Finally there were articles that would have been seen in any women's magazine, on the value of gas, on childcare, on fashion. Later on books and pamphlets would supplement the journal.

Propaganda work was carried out via radio broadcasts, travelling libraries and propaganda tours. One member, Pepita, described her experience on propaganda trips: "We would call the women together and explain to them... that there is a clearly defined role for women, that women should not lose their independence, but that a women can be a mother and a companera at the same time...

Young women would come over to me and say "This is very interesting. What you're saying we've never heard before. It's something that we've felt, but we didn't know"... The ideas that grabbed them the most? Talk about the power men exercised over women... There would be a kind of uproar when you would say to them, "We cannot permit men to think themselves superior to women, that they have a right to rule over them". I think that Spanish women were waiting anxiously for that call".

Many of Spain's workers and peasants were illiterate. In response, the women of Mujeres Libres set up literacy programmes, technically oriented classes, and

Mujeres Libres by Aileen O'Carroll

(You can also find this article at www.infoshop.org/afem_kiosk.html)

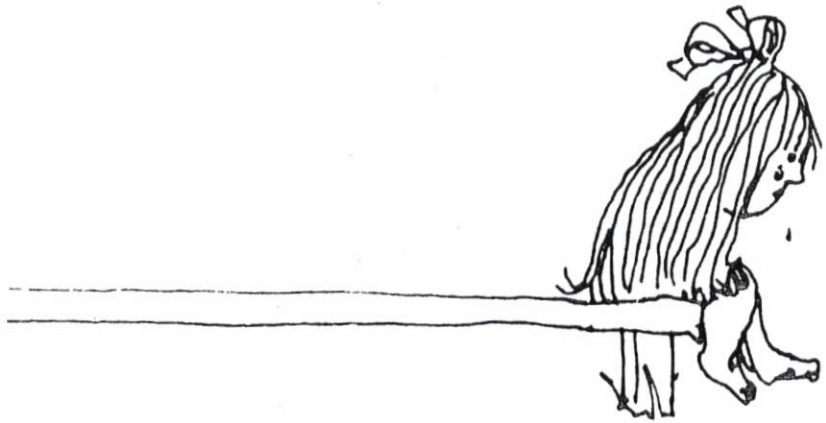
Mujeres Libres (Free Women) were a group of women anarchists who organised and fought both for women's liberation and an anarchist revolution during the Spanish Civil War. The work they did is truly inspirational. Their example shows how the struggle against women's oppression and against capitalism can be combined in one fight for freedom.

As anarchists they rejected any relegation of women to a secondary position within the libertarian movement. In the 1930's feminism had a narrower meaning than it does now, and they rejected it as a theory which fought for 'equality of women within an existing system of privileges'. They argued "We are not, and were not then feminists. We were not fighting against men. We did not want to substitute a feminist hierarchy for a masculine one. It's necessary to work, to struggle, together because if we don't we'll never have a social revolution. But we needed our own organisation to struggle for ourselves".
They said: "We are aware of the precedents set by both feminist organisations and by the political parties... We could not follow either of these paths. We could not separate the women's problem from the social problem. Nor could we deny the significance of the first by converting women into a simple instrument for any organisation, even.. our own libertarian organisation.

The intention that underlay our activities was much broader: to serve a doctrine, not a party, to empower women to make of them individuals capable of contributing to the structuring of the future society, individuals who have learned to be self- determining, not to follow blindly the dictates of any organisation".

Mujeres Libres had a two pronged strategy, of capacitacion (preparing), and captacion (incorporation

created with all of these things. Not only will this cop pull me over if I don't pay my taxes-to-slaughter-foreign-innocents but he'll stroll up to me, with his hands on his belt, occasionally brushing past the cool of his weapons and say, "Now, now sweetheart, we have to remember to pay our taxes on time or we get in trouble." A lecture to go with my fine. With very little brute physical force, the State has succeeded in scaring me into compliance. My mind might be hot and quick and furious, but my body will remain still; and for fear of my SAFETY I will follow his orders, endure his speech passively, and eventually pay my bogus "violation". He won't have to pull me out of my car and beat me, but the point is that he knows *that I know* that he can.



Anarchist Librarians-

The Revolution Will Be Cataloged

The stereotypical librarian— glasses perched on her nose, bun tightly wound at the back of her neck, pencil behind her ear, shushing with abandon— she's the one you've got to watch out for, because she's the gatekeeper to vast stores of information. And right now, she's pissed.

Librarians have come out as staunch defenders of free speech. They have fought against Internet filtering in public libraries, the Patriot Act, banned books, and copyright restrictions on intellectual property.

The American Library Association has had a Feminist Task Force since 1970, tackling such issues as sexism in librarianship, pornography and censorship, racism and ethnic diversity in librarianship. They endorsed passage of the ERA and boycotted ALA conferences in states where the ERA was not ratified. They prohibit sexist, racist language in ALA documents, develop ALA comparable pay guidelines, and require that ALA use affirmative action as library school accreditation criterion. Individual members also monitor ALA exhibits and publications for sexist, racist or homophobic content.

In addition to the Feminist Task Force radical librarians have formed loose collectives, like the Anarchist Librarians, whose spokesperson, Chuck Munson, is a familiar face within anarchist circles. In 1995 he started the infoshop.org website, which acts as a clearinghouse and independent media center for anarchists and anti-authoritarians.

Munson gave a speech after the American Library Association meeting in Florida in June 2004. In it, he explained anarchist librarianship in this way,

" Anarchist librarianship is much like radical librarianship in that it includes many of the same concerns about corporate influence on and in libraries, class and race issues, privatization of library work, social responsibility, censorship, the environment and so on. Anarchist librarianship is feminist, anti-racist, anti-classist, anti-establishment, and for egalitarianism and human rights for everyone. It compliments radical librarianship because anarchism has a history of supporting social responsibility, because anarchism rests on ideas like cooperation, anti-hierarchy, freedom, mutual aid, and so on."

"Beyond Utopia Lies Anarchism" is a librarian's cataloging in-joke (yes, there are such things!) It pays homage to the fact that library classification schemes place materials on anarchism *after* materials on utopias. It also reflects the belief that anarchism is different from the unattainable perfection of utopia (which, after all, is Greek for "not a place"). Anarchism is no mere story for idle dreamers. Anarchism is a living, breathing, body of thought intended to be put into practice.
(http://web.hamline.edu/personal/jgeorge/index.html)

To limit the press is to insult a nation; to prohibit reading of certain books is to declare the inhabitants to be either fools or slaves.
- Claude Adrien Helvetius